

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image forming apparatus that is shipped with a developing member being fitted to an apparatus main body, comprising:

a developer leakage preventing member that prevents leakage of a developer from the developing member,

wherein the developer leakage preventing member is fitted at an attachment position opposing the developing member in place of a component that is detachably attachable to the apparatus main body at the attachment position.

2. An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the detachably attachable component is a regularly-replaced component.

3. An image forming apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the regularly-replaced component is an image forming unit including an image bearing body,

wherein the apparatus main body is provided with a positioning portion for the image bearing body, and

the developer leakage preventing member is provided with a positioning protrusion that is fitted to the positioning portion.

4. An image forming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the developing member is movable between a position opposing the image bearing body and a position retracted from the image bearing body,

wherein with the developer leakage preventing member being

fitted to the apparatus main body, the developing member is set immovable.

5. An image forming apparatus according to claim 4, wherein under the state where the developer leakage preventing member is fitted to the apparatus main body, the developer leakage preventing member and the developing member are abutted against each other.

6. An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the developer leakage preventing member is provided with a seal member in an area opposing the developing member, wherein with the developer leakage preventing member being fitted to the apparatus main body, the seal member is not abutted against a developing roll of the developing member but is abutted against a housing of the developing member.

7. An image forming apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the developing member is provided with a guide rail that guides the developer leakage preventing member, wherein the developer leakage preventing member is guided by the guide rail at a time of fitting, and

the seal member is abutted against the housing of the developing member at a position at which the fitting is completed.

8. An image forming apparatus according to claim 3, wherein a fitting path of the developer leakage preventing member and a fitting path of the image forming unit are

set different from each other.

9. An image forming apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein in addition to the prevention of the leakage of the
developer, the developer leakage preventing member achieves
prevention of vibrations of the developing member.

10. An image forming apparatus according to claim 1,
comprising:

a plurality of developing members,
wherein leakage of developers from the plurality of
developing members is prevented with the single developer leakage
preventing member.

11. An image forming apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein with the developer leakage preventing member being
fitted to the apparatus main body, the image forming apparatus is
set inoperable.

12. An image forming apparatus according to claim 11,
wherein in order to set the image forming apparatus inoperable
under the state where the developer leakage preventing member is
fitted to the apparatus main body, a storage medium is used which
is provided for an image forming unit and stores identification
information with reference to which the image forming unit is
identified on an apparatus main body side.

13. An image forming apparatus according to claim 11,
wherein in order to set the image forming apparatus inoperable

under the state where the developer leakage preventing member is fitted to the apparatus main body, an operation prohibition displaying tag is used which is provided for the developer leakage preventing member and is exhibited outside the apparatus main body.

14. An image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein an image forming unit itself is used as the developer leakage preventing member, and

the image forming apparatus is shipped with the developing member being set at a developing position opposing an image bearing body of the image forming unit.

15. An image forming apparatus that is shipped with a developing member being fitted to an apparatus main body, comprising:
a developer leakage preventing member that prevents leakage of a developer from the developing member,

wherein the developer leakage preventing member is fitted to the apparatus main body in place of an image bearing body opposing the developing member and is fixed to the apparatus main body using a member that is also used to fix the image bearing body thereto.

16. An image forming apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the image bearing body is fixed to the apparatus main body through supporting axes protrudingly formed in both end portions of the image bearing body.

17. An image forming apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the developer leakage preventing member is fixed to

the apparatus main body through protrusions protrudingly formed in both end portions of the developer leakage preventing member so as to respectively correspond to the supporting axes of the image bearing body.

18. A developer leakage preventing member that is fitted to an image forming apparatus shipped with a developing member being attached to an apparatus main body so as to oppose an intermediate transfer body, and which prevents leakage of a developer from the developing member,

the developer leakage preventing member comprising:

a first surface having a shape with which an opening portion of the developing member is closed; and

a second surface having a shape that approximately resembles a part of a shape of the intermediate transfer body.

19. A developer leakage preventing member according to claim 18, further comprising seal members that prevent leakage of the developer from both sides of the developing member.

20. A developer leakage preventing member according to claim 18,

wherein the first surface of the developer leakage preventing member is formed to have a curved surface that is larger than a developing roll.

21. A developer leakage preventing member according to claim 18, which is formed in a vertical rectangular parallelepiped shape

whose external shape resembles an external shape of an image bearing body unit and whose surface on an intermediate transfer body side is fully opened.

22. A developer leakage preventing member according to claim 18, which is constructed so as to abut against a housing of the developing member under a state where the developing member is retracted.

23. A developer leakage preventing member according to claim 18,

wherein a side surface of the developer leakage preventing member on an intermediate transfer body side is fully opened and a portion of the developer leakage preventing member corresponding to a surface of the intermediate transfer body is cut away in a circular arc shape.

24. A developer leakage preventing member according to claim 18,

wherein protrusions respectively corresponding to supporting axes of an image bearing body are protrudingly formed on a front-side end surface and a rear-side end surface of the developer leakage preventing member.

25. A developer leakage preventing member according to claim 18, which is fitted to the apparatus main body in place of an image bearing body unit in completely the same manner as the image bearing body unit at the time of shipment of the image forming apparatus.

26. A developer leakage preventing member according to claim 18, which is fitted to the apparatus main body so as to cover an opening portion side of the retracted developing member without generating gaps.

27. A method for shipping/transporting an image forming apparatus with a developing member being fitted to an apparatus main body, comprising:

at the time of shipment, retracting a unit including the developing member to a rearward and fitting a developer leakage preventing member in place of an image bearing body unit opposing the developing member; and

after transportation, detaching the developer leakage preventing member and fitting the image bearing body unit.

28. A method for shipping/transporting an image forming apparatus according to claim 27,

wherein attachment and detachment of the developer leakage preventing member is performed in completely the same manner as attachment and detachment of the image bearing body unit.